

Transport Working Group Notes – 8th March 2017, Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber, Sheffield Road, Rotherham S60 1DX

In attendance:

Andrew Denniff (Chamber of Commerce)
Adrian Platts (Chamber of Commerce)
Tony Hickton
Alan Rigall (First Group)
Ian Ashton (Rotherham MBC)
Gareth Owen (QFM Group)

Dominic Beck (Chamber of Commerce)
Clive Watkinson (JC Snell) – Chair
Richard Marshall (Highways England)
Ann Bedoes (Barnsley MBC)
Matthew Reynolds (Rotherham MBC)
Mike Smith (MJS Business Consultancy Ltd)

Apologies from:

Andy Simpson (First Group)
John Young (Stagecoach)
Sarah Cooper (Burrows Motor Company)
David Boden (TM Travel)

HS2 Update

Andrew Denniff spoke about the present HS2 consultation report stating that the Chamber would be feeding back and reflecting the views of Chamber members.

- Further to covering the report, discussion took place about the HS2 station plans. It was noted that Ed Milliband (MP for Doncaster North), has discussed with Chris Grayling (Secretary of State for Transport), the options for stations for HS2 and Chris Grayling confirmed that Meadowhall is still on the table.
- As a key point to the consultation, Clive Watkinson asked the question that if there was no station, would the group be opposed to the route? Gareth Owen commented that if a station was not well situated it could have a negative effect on other routes for the rest of the region. Ian Ashmore commented that no significant focus has been placed on connectivity with other transport networks, and failure to place a station in the right area could have far reaching consequences for the city region. Ian also stated that the current plan does not provide for connectivity from Sheffield City Region to Leeds, York and the North East of the UK. Tony Hickton commented that the new proposal does not deliver the advantages to the region of the original proposal, therefore why would local businesses support the new proposal?
- Richard Marshall suggested that facts and figures will be key factors in the feedback of this document.
- Various forum members made additional comments about the content of the consultation feedback and the document was to be amended and reviewed accordingly before submission.

Trans Pennine Tunnel

Clive Watkinson continued with discussion about the TPT feasibility study and current status.

- Ian Ashton expressed that TPT study needs to be more open to external parties with key interests in regional infrastructure, i.e. Local Authorities and that it needs more work as it could be a very important feature for Sheffield City Region.
- Tony Hickton was extremely concerned over the lack of enthusiasm by Sheffield City Region LEP, given that the most recent meeting was so poorly attended. Considering it is such an important issue, some members were disappointed that they had also planned a key meeting on the same date (well after the TPT study meeting was arranged), therefore reducing the important figures of the LEP who should have contributed to that meeting. Tony clarified that Manchester's LEP members are significant and are invested in the project. Tony stated that if the appropriate level of attention is not given to this project by our own local LEP, there is a significant risk of the North East Quadrant gaining the benefit that Sheffield City Region should be getting.
- Tony clarified that the study is showing that the plan is a no brainer, and would yield significant GVA value for Sheffield City Region and the North West, and far outweigh any investment costs made in the region. Tony presented a copy of an action plan from the recent TPT Study meeting, which outlines the benefits of the concept/study outcome.
- Richard Marshall that more modelling work is to be done due to the vast expense of the project. He highlighted that Corridor B had been highlighted as the preferred route as it would be the most economically advantageous, and potentially has the most minimal effect on the environment.
- Tony mentioned that Manchester and Sheffield are reported to be the two worst connected cities in the UK. He also confirmed that the focus of the tunnel is firmly on road provision.

Local Transport Issues

Barnsley

- M1 J36 (Birdwell) work is nearly complete and it anticipated that all lanes will be fully operational in the next couple of weeks. Work is in progress at M1 (J37) though should be completed imminently.
- Moto are looking to place a site for Barnsley/Wakefield junction, a planning application is to be considered.
- Underpinning work is taking place at Goldthorpe to ensure roads remain efficient going forwards.

Rotherham

- There is a possible application for planning regarding a services at M1 J33 which could affect a proposed site at M1 J35. This would be placed alongside part of a planned road widening bid from M1 J33 to Waverley (Catcliffe). Rotherham cannot currently reach an agreement with Sheffield regarding the Waverley link road which could put related funding at risk.
- The A57 at Swallownest is currently being signalised at the roundabout and T-junction for Swallownest as part of plans to accommodate Gullivers World.
- The tram train between Sheffield and Rotherham is now expected to be in place by Summer 2018. Current station plans will start the design stage for a site near Parkgate in April.
- Rotherham Interchange is to be refurbished to meet the growing needs for public transport.

Any other Business

Various points were discussed, with most being raised by members regarding local traffic issues.

- A member raised a question regarding the new traffic light system at Waverley, querying why the investment has been made in the new system, yet the lights are not yet operational. The reasoning given behind this is that these are in preparation for the growing domestic and commercial properties that are planned to develop over the coming years in the area and some of the roadworks at the roundabout are not yet complete. This will also provide additional benefit as and when the proposed Parkway road widening activity takes place as it will help manage traffic using the Catcliffe parkway exits.

Date of the Next Meeting

The meeting date is subject to change due to the Easter holidays taking place around the next proposed date. The change will be confirmed by email invite.